

A.B. Simpson & the Modern Faith Movement – Paul L King

by Paul L. King

One of the most popular and controversial movements in today's Christian world is the "word of faith" teaching, sometimes known as the "word movement," "health, wealth and prosperity gospel" or "name it and claim it." Some believe this teaching is fresh revelation from God; others believe it is a heretical cult. On one hand, we are exhorted by the Apostle Paul to "walk by faith, not by sight" ([2 Corinthians. 5:7](#)). Yet he also warns Titus to teach others to be "sound in faith" ([Titus 2:1-2](#)). As Dr. A.W. Tozer has admonished, "Not all faith pleases God."⁽¹⁾ How then are we to discern between truth and error in modern-day faith teaching so that we can truly be strong in faith? The writings of our founder A.B. Simpson (Albert Benjamin Simpson) provide a balanced walk of faith.

If we look at the teachings of A.B. Simpson and other early Christian and Missionary Alliance leaders, as well as classic evangelical leaders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, we will find both areas of agreement with and opposition to the contemporary faith movement. Recent books such as *A Different Gospel* by Dan R. McConnell, *The Seduction of Christianity* by Dave Hunt and *Christianity in Crisis* by Hank Hanegraaff have declared the modern faith movement cultic and heretical.(2) Yet some of the faith teachings considered heretical by these writers are similar to the teaching of early Alliance leaders and classic evangelical writers. In fact, modern faith teachers refer extensively to the writings of three early Alliance-affiliated writers: *The Authority of the Believer* by missionary and Alliance Life editor John A. MacMillan; *Bodily Healing and the Atonement* by professor T.J. McCrossan (who also authored a book on the gift of tongues published by The Christian and Missionary Alliance); and *Christ the Healer* by Alliance healing evangelist F.F. Bosworth.(3)

While we would agree with McConnell, Hunt and Hanegraaff that certain elements of faith teaching are cultic and heretical, (4) they also attack teachings on faith which have been taught by leaders of the early healing and holiness movement, including those of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Some have thus not only rejected modern faith teaching, but also valid principles of faith which sound like modern faith teaching. We must recognize that not all principles taught by contemporary faith teachers are invalid. The Latin phrase *abusus non tollit usus* applies here: “The abuse does not bear away the use,” or in other words, the abuse should not obscure or negate

legitimate use. Simpson phrased it this way: “The best remedy for the abuse of anything is its wise and proper use.”(5) In this analysis, we want to point out the areas of legitimate use in principles of faith taught by Simpson, early Alliance leaders and other classic evangelical holiness/healing leaders. These classic teachings which are sound in faith will be compared and contrasted with contemporary faith teaching.

A.B. Simpson is considered by modern church historians to be one of the foremost leaders in the “faith cure” movement, second only to Dr. Charles Cullis.(6) While some of these leaders used the term “faith healing” or “faith cure,” Simpson himself preferred to avoid these terms and use the term “divine healing.” Nevertheless, Simpson wrote and preached extensively on faith and was one of the leading teachers of what could be considered the “classic faith movement” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There are some who, because of the similarity of Simpson’s writings to some contemporary faith teachings, regard Simpson as radical and unsound in his teaching.(7) However, other sound evangelical faith leaders of his day, such as W.E. Boardman, A.J. Gordon, Dr. Charles Cullis, Andrew Murray, R.A. Torrey, E.M. Bounds, George Muller, Charles Spurgeon and many others, taught sound principles of faith in relation to healing and prayer, similar to Simpson’s teaching.

We must admit that some similarities exist between The Christian and Missionary Alliance and the modern faith movement. Both believe 1) healing is a provision of the atonement of Christ for the believer; 2) since Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever ([Hebrews 13:8](#)), healing and the supernatural power and gifts of Spirit are still operative today; and 3) as believers we have an inheritance in Christ and the right to exercise spiritual authority. Writers such as Hank Hanegraaff and John MacArthur (Charismatic Chaos) deny some of these truths.(8)

However, there are strong contrasts as well between modern faith teaching and what Simpson and early Alliance leaders taught. Modern faith teachers have gone far beyond the sound teaching of classic faith writers, borrowing from their principles, but also supplementing them with humanistic and secular metaphysical concepts. In reality, they teach a mixture of genuine truth and dangerous error.

The Authority of the Believer

For instance, modern faith teaching emphasizes the “authority of the believer,” that is, believers have certain rights and privileges as children of God and spiritual authority to overcome Satan and claim our inheritance.(9) This teaching is not original with modern faith leaders, but was promoted by classic teachers of

faith in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.(10) Simpson taught as a truth being restored to the Church that we have spiritual authority as a believer as part of our inheritance as a child of God: “We must be ready also to claim our victory and exercise the authority which He has given us.”(11) Simpson also preached on the believer’s authority of binding and loosing. (12)

Alliance missionary and editor John A. MacMillan expanded upon Simpson’s principles of spiritual authority and binding and loosing in a series of articles entitled The Authority of the Believer, published in the Alliance Weekly in 1932. One scholar has shown that modern faith leader Kenneth Hagin, who has popularized the principle, extensively plagiarized Dr. MacMillan’s material.(13) Hanegraaff, however, attacks modern faith teaching on binding and loosing, asserting that application to church discipline is the only valid interpretation, and that they are distorting Scripture by applying it to binding demonic powers.(14) Certainly the modern faith teachers have taken the concept too far in calling some things demonic which are of the flesh, but, contrary to Hanegraaff, the concept is biblical.

Although the primary application of binding and loosing in the context of Matthew 18 is in relation to church discipline, famed Biblical expositor G. Campbell Morgan says of this Scripture: “They have much wider application than the application Jesus

made of them at this point. We are perfectly justified in lifting them out of their setting, and using them over a wider area of thought.”(15) Twice earlier in Matthew, Jesus refers to the concept of binding and loosing in relation to exercising spiritual authority over demonic activity ([Matthew 16:18-19](#); [12:28-29](#); see also [Mark 3:27](#); [Luke 11:20-22](#)). Thus, the concept is sound and was taught, not only in early Alliance circles through Simpson and MacMillan, but also universally by classic faith teachers such as Andrew Murray, Jessie Penn-Lewis and Watchman Nee.(16)

Modern faith teachers, however, stretch this truth beyond anything Simpson and MacMillan taught, claiming that Christ gave all authority to believers, rather than delegating a portion of His authority to the Church.(17) This is a serious error and gives glory to man rather than God.

Faith as a Force

Hanegraaff says that the modern concept of faith as a creative force is metaphysical.(18) Nevertheless, Simpson and other classic evangelical teachers refer to faith, prayer and even God Himself as a force.(19) Simpson believed that faith is a creative force from God Himself as part of His all-powerful nature which we can harness to accomplish God’s will: “Faith is an actual spiritual force. It is no doubt one of the attributes of God Himself.

There is no doubt that while the soul is exercising, through the power of God, the faith that commands what God commands, a mighty force is operating at that moment upon the obstacle.”(20)

Simpson’s understanding of faith as a force is probably most influenced by W.E. Boardman, a nineteenth-century holiness and healing leader. In his book *The Higher Christian Life*, which had a strong impact on Simpson’s experience and understanding of the crisis of sanctification, Boardman writes that faith is “an abiding force” along with hope and love.(21)

While modern faith teachers claim to teach this, they teach a serious error by considering faith to be an impersonal force which can be exerted by unbelievers as well as believers, influenced perhaps by the New Age Star Wars concept of “The Force.”(22) They also teach a metaphysical concept that words are containers for the force to create that which does not exist. (23) Thus they attribute to man the power to create out of nothing, something that should only be attributed to God.

While Simpson did believe faith is a force, he did not believe it is an impersonal force, but an attribute of God Himself. He clearly asserts, “Divine healing is not metaphysical healing,” which he explains as healing “by mental force.”(24) “It is not a mysterious

current which flows into one body from another. . . . [S]uch an influence is repudiated by all who act as true ministers of divine healing.”(25)

Positive Mental Attitude and Positive Confession

While McConnell, Hanegraaff and Dave Hunt in *The Seduction of Christianity* rightly warn against psychological or psychic use of the mind,(26) they fail to discern that there is a valid Scriptural application of positive mental attitude (PMA), of which modern PMA teaching is a counterfeit. Classic evangelical leaders taught that focusing on Christ is a “right mental attitude” and that rejoicing is a “Scriptural state of mind.”(27)

Simpson clearly believed a positive mental attitude contributes to healing and answered prayer:

A flash of ill temper, a cloud of despondency, an impure thought or desire can poison your blood, inflame your tissues, disturb your nerves and interrupt the whole process of God’s life in your body! On the other hand, the spirit of joy, freedom from anxious care and worry, a generous and loving heart, the sedative of peace, the uplifting influence of hope and confidence—these are better than pills, stimulants and sedatives, and the very nature of things will exercise the most

benign influence over your physical functions, making it true in a literal as well as a spiritual sense, that “the joy of the Lord is your strength.”(28)

In his pamphlet “How to Receive Divine Healing,” Simpson advises, “Don’t expect to have a spell of weariness and reaction,” but rather “just go calmly forward, . . . expecting Him to give you the necessary strength to carry you thru [sic].”(29) This was not a psychological or soulish power, but the power of Christ Himself.

He also encouraged making positive confessions of our faith: “We must confess Him as our Guardian and Deliverer. . . . We must say it as well as feel it,”(30) and “Faith will die without confession.”(31) McConnell claims that teaching on positive confession originates not with Kenneth Hagin, but with E.W. Kenyon, and is rooted in the metaphysical cults.(32) On the other hand, Bruce Barron, author of The Health and Wealth Gospel, asserts, “The beginnings of positive confession with regard to healing can be spotted as far back as the work of A.B. Simpson.”(33)

Both writers are wrong, for the idea is not original with Kenyon or even Simpson. In actuality, the roots of the principle of confessing one’s faith are found in eighteenth-century

Methodist leaders such as John Fletcher, Hester Ann Rogers and William Corvoso, and were expanded upon and popularized by holiness leader Phoebe Palmer.(34) Later holiness leaders such as Simpson, Andrew Murray, W.E. Boardman and Hannah Whitall Smith all continued to advocate positive confession of one's faith.(35)

While classic teaching on positive confession sounds very similar to modern faith theology, unlike faith teachers the classic teachers did not believe that you can “name and claim” or “confess and possess” anything you desire, use confession as an automatic formula or make people feel guilty about making the slightest “negative confession.” For example, Palmer warned against those who taught what she called “faithism,” which she defined as “telling others to ‘only believe you have it, and you have got it.’ ”(36) Apparently an early version of “name it and claim it” was being promulgated in her day as well.

Faith in Faith, in God or of God?

Simpson taught you should “act your faith,” “not to show your faith or display courage,” as modern faith leaders teach, “but because of your faith.”(37) Whereas modern faith teaching claims we should have faith in our faith, Simpson taught with foresight a century ago, “It is most important that you should be careful that you do not do this on any human faith or word,”(38)

and again, “Faith is hindered by what we call ‘our faith.’ ”(39) Popular modern faith teacher Fred Price, a former Christian and Missionary Alliance pastor, abandoned Simpson’s sound teaching by saying that it is not God who heals, but your faith that heals.(40) Simpson always points us back to focus on Jesus, not on our own efforts, saying, “We must claim the faith of God, letting the Spirit of Jesus sustain our faith with His strong faith.”(41)

This quote from Simpson leads to another faith teaching. Both Simpson and modern faith leaders claim that according to the Greek of [Matthew 11:22](#), we should have the “faith of God,” not merely faith in God. Hanegraaff and McConnell take issue with this interpretation, and McConnell claims Kenyon is the originator of this belief.(42) But his own mentor and critic of the modern faith movement, Dr. Charles Farah (whose father was an Alliance pastor), cites Charles Price and demonstrates this is a valid interpretation.(43) Further, while Hanegraaff and McConnell cite several scholars to support their contention, they fail to point out that just as many evangelical leaders and exegetes can be cited which accept the “faith of God” interpretation, including Simpson, Charles Price, Carrie Judd Montgomery, Charles Spurgeon, Andrew Murray, Jessie Penn-Lewis, Princeton scholar Joseph Alexander, Greek professor T.J. McCrossan and theologian Charles Farah.(44) So Simpson is

no maverick when he declares, “We must claim the faith of God, letting the Spirit of Jesus sustain our faith with His strong faith.”(45)

Faith Developed or Imparted?

There is an important difference, however, between Simpson’s understanding of the faith of God and contemporary faith teaching of a “God-kind of faith.” One of the critical errors modern faith teachers make is to generalize the “faith of God” (or “mountain-moving faith”) of [Mark 11:22-24](#) as a universal principle for all believers to develop and use in all situations. In contrast, Simpson taught that such mountain-moving faith is imparted by God, not developed in the ordinary everyday exercise of faith, commenting that “this is a special work of the Holy Ghost.”(46) Andrew Murray puts it this way: “Every exhibition of the power of faith was the fruit of a special revelation from God. . . . Our spiritual power depends on God Himself speaking those promises to us.”(47)

This makes a crucial difference in the appropriate application of faith. For instance, while modern faith teachers urge abandoning medicine as an exercise of faith, Simpson counsels, “If you have any question about your faith for this, make it a special matter of preparation and prayer. Ask God to give you special faith for this act.”(48) Whereas modern faith teachers make a blanket

application of Jesus' statement to all situations, classic faith teachers recognize that this type of faith is given by God only on special occasions. Another example is that Simpson taught that as a response of faith you should ignore your symptoms and put the focus on Christ only if God has imparted faith to you for healing.(49) Modern faith teachers have gone beyond this truth, saying that you should deny your symptoms to prove your faith, not as a response of the faith God has given. This again is the error of putting faith in one's faith, rather than in God. Simpson taught that you should act your faith only when God has given you a clear indication:

Whenever faith can clearly know that He has spoken, all it has to do is to lay the whole responsibility on Him and go forward. . . .(50) This is the faith that claims divine healing. It is not merely a general trust that God will do what is best, but a specific confidence that He will do the thing we ask Him, if that thing is one that He has promised in His word.(51)

Sickness, Death and Long Life

Similar to modern faith teaching, both Simpson and Andrew Murray believed that it was possible for a person to live out a full life in faith without sickness:

There is no need that we should die of disease. The system might just wear out and pass away as naturally as the apple ripens and falls in autumn, or the wheat matures and dies. It has simply fulfilled its natural period. . . . The promise of healing is not physical immortality, but health until our life work is done.(52)

Unlike modern faith teachers, however, Simpson would not say that a person necessarily lacked faith because he was not healed, died in sickness or died young:

Sometimes the Master is taking home His child and will He not, in such cases, lift the veil and show the trusting heart that its service is done? How often He does! A dear young girl in Michigan who for some time claimed healing, awoke one day from sleep, her face covered with the reflection of heaven, and told her loved ones that the Master had led her to trust for life thus far, but now was taking her to Himself. It is well, and let no one dare to reproach such a heart with unfaithfulness.(53)

Whereas many modern faith teachers would berate the child or parents for lack of faith, Simpson makes clear that her death at a young age was God's sovereign will.

Modern faith teaching has often put a guilt trip on people, saying that it is absolutely God's will for all to be healed, and if a person isn't healed, it is man's fault. While sin or lack of faith could be causes for lack of healing, Simpson listed a variety of reasons, asserting that while it is generally God's will to heal all who believe, God in His sovereignty may not always grant healing. (54) Simpson taught that we should pray for and claim deliverance unless we get a clear indication from God otherwise. (55)

Faith, Doctors and the Use of Medicine

Simpson's views on medicine are perhaps the most controversial and also the most misunderstood of his faith teachings. Dr. Paul Chappell, Dean of the School of Theology and Mission at Oral Roberts University, considers him a radical because he encourages trusting God without medicine.(56) Simpson does teach that healing without medicine is to be preferred as God's way:

God has nowhere prescribed medical "means," and we have no right to infer that drugs are ordinarily his "means." . . .(57) But for the trusting and obedient child of God there is the more excellent way which His word has clearly prescribed, and by which His name will be ever glorified afresh, and our spiritual life continually renewed.(58)

However, Chappell misunderstands Simpson's teaching, which was virtually the same as that of Andrew Murray.(59) In reality, it was more moderate than healing evangelists Maria Woodworth Etter and John Dowie, who were closer in their beliefs to the modern faith teachers. Modern faith teachers imply that if you have to use doctors and medicine, your faith is weak. But Simpson stated that though divine healing without doctors and medicine is God's preferred way, you should not abandon medicine unless clearly directed by God.(60) This is the key difference between Simpson and modern faith teachers, one which Chappell fails to recognize, claiming Simpson "allowed only limited use of physicians and medicine."(61) Simpson does assert that once a person has received faith for healing, "from that moment doubt should be regarded as absolutely out of the question, and even the very thought of retreating or resorting to old 'means' inadmissible. Of course, such a person will at once abandon all remedies and medical treatment."(62) In isolation from his other teachings, that statement would appear to be radical. However, Simpson makes clear that "from that moment" means from the point that faith has been imparted by God, not from when a person exercises faith on his own.

On the contrary, Simpson stated, "We do not mean to imply . . . that the medical profession is sinful, or the use of means always wrong. There may be, there always will be, innumerable cases in which faith cannot be exercised," and there is "ample room for employment" of such "natural means."(63)

We do believe God heals His sick and suffering children when they can fully trust Him. At the same time we believe that no one should act precipitously or presumptuously in this matter, or abandon natural remedies unless they have an intelligent, Scriptural and unquestioning trust in Him alone and really know Him well enough to touch Him in living contact as their Healer.(64)

Faith and Prosperity

Whereas modern faith teachers put a high emphasis on prosperity, Simpson quotes the German mystic John Tauler, saying, “Thou didst say, ‘God prosper thee.’ I have never been unprosperous, for I know how to live with God.”(65) A faith that is focused on God through the life of the indwelling Christ is not focused on one’s own welfare. In fact, this emphasis on claiming things for one’s self is one of the most crucial flaws of the modern faith movement. Contrary to modern faith emphasis, Simpson realized “faith [is] yielding up the world for a better inheritance.” Like Lot, Simpson says, people with an “earthly spirit . . . contend for the best of the land.” But, in contrast, “the man of faith can let the present world go because he knows he has a better, but even as he lets it go God tells him that all things are his because he is Christ’s.”(66)

One definition of a heresy is “one truth emphasized to the exclusion of another truth.” The focus on claiming one’s rights as a child of God has ignored the place of the cross and self-denial. Some faith teachers go so far as to say that Christ suffered so you don’t have to suffer. The chief lacking message of the modern faith movement, which in contrast was a strong emphasis of Simpson and the faith movement of a century ago, is the crucified life, the message of God-centered holiness. The real walk of faith and victory can only be lived by dying to self and being infused with the resurrection life of Christ. Simpson wrote, “How very much of the life of faith consists in simply denying ourselves.”(67) It is what Martin Luther called a theology of the cross as opposed to a theology of glory.

Conclusion

This is a brief synopsis of faith teachings in light of A.B. Simpson’s writings, historic Christian and Missionary Alliance teaching and classic evangelical teaching on faith. Further analysis would reveal both additional similarities as well as additional contrasts between classic and contemporary faith teaching.

Writers such as Hunt, Hanegraaff, McArthur and McConnell do expose much wrong teaching and practice in the modern charismatic and faith movements. But they also oppose

positions held by classic faith and holiness leaders such as Simpson, so their conclusions must not be accepted uncritically. On the other hand, while there are elements of truth in some contemporary faith leaders' teachings, there is also much serious error. Simpson and the classic faith teachers provide a healthy balanced theology and practice of faith. We must be careful not to "throw out the baby with the bath water," i.e., abandon valid principles of faith just because they have been mixed with unsound teaching. Alliance people should be encouraged to shun unsound teachings and instead read, study and pray over the writings of sound classic faith teachers such as Simpson, J.A. MacMillan, Andrew Murray, E.M. Bounds, George Muller and Charles Spurgeon. These are the men who can show how to really walk by faith. With these mentors we need not be afraid of being led astray. Then we will be both strong in faith and sound in faith.

End Notes

1 A.W. Tozer, *Of God and Men* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1960), 54.

2 D.R. McConnell, *A Different Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988); Dave Hunt and T.A. McMahon, *The Seduction of Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House

Publishers, 1985); Hank Hanegraaff, Christianity in Crisis (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1993).

3 John A. MacMillan, The Authority of the Believer (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1980); T.J. McCrossan, Bodily Healing and the Atonement (Youngstown, OH, 1930); F.F. Bosworth, Christ the Healer (River Forest, IL, 1924). Reprint of 1948 revised edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1973). See also T.J. McCrossan, Speaking with Other Tongues: Sign or Gift—Which? (Christian Publications, 1927). McCrossan's and Bosworth's books on healing are used as textbooks at Kenneth Hagin's Rhema Bible Training Center.

4 As McConnell has demonstrated, E.W. Kenyon was the father of the modern faith movement. Hagin depends very heavily on his concepts and writings. Kenyon promulgated many of the classic faith teachings, but also added his own beliefs tainted by New Thought metaphysics. The problem is in rejecting or accepting Kenyon or Hagin's teaching indiscriminately. McConnell and Hanegraaff clearly delineate where Kenyon and modern faith teachers deviate from orthodox Christian doctrine:

1. A faulty view of Christology—The spiritual death and new birth of Jesus

2 A distorted view of Atonement—The atonement of the devil

3 An inflated view of man —The little gods concept

4 A deflated view of God—God has abdicated control to the Christian

5 Deistic concepts regarding spiritual laws and forces

6 Gnostic and dualistic tendencies of revelation knowledge

7 An unbalanced, materialistic view of prosperity

5 The Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly (March 27, 1891), 195.

6 Donald Dayton, Theological Roots of Pentecostalism (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987), 128.

7 Bruce Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1987), 60; Paul Chappell, “Healing Movements,” *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), 363-364.

8 John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 237-269, 314; Hanegraaff, 249-251. MacArthur denies healing in the atonement, the crisis experience of the baptism or filling of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit for today. Hanegraaff berates belief in healing in the atonement and exercise of spiritual authority through binding and loosing.

9 See Kenneth Hagin, *Authority of the Believer* (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library Publications, 1967).

10 For instance, Andrew Murray was teaching on the spiritual authority of the believer through the name of Jesus as early as 1885 (*With Christ in the School of Prayer* [Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1981], 116-117, 132-138, 176-183). He also refers to the popular hymn writer Dr. Horatius Bonar who was teaching the concept before him (p. 136). In 1895 Dr. A.T. Pierson, a Presbyterian friend of Simpson, taught, “Obedience to Him means command over others; in proportion as we are

subject to Him, even the demons are subject unto us in His name” (The Acts of the Holy Spirit [Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1980], 92). Jessie Penn-Lewis, collaborating with Evan Roberts in War on the Saints (Ft. Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1977, 1984, 22, 32-33), following the Welsh revival of 1904-1905, taught the authority of the believer over Satan.

11 A.B. Simpson, Christ in the Bible (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1992), 4:190.

12 Ibid., 4:94-96; see also 3:491.

13 McConnell, 69-71; Dale H. Simmons, “Mimicking MacMillan,” unpublished term paper, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma, April 23, 1984.

14 Hanegraaff, 257-258.

15 G. Campbell Morgan, The Gospel According to Matthew (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Publishing Co., 1929), 233.

16 Andrew Murray taught the concept as early as 1885 in *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, 117. Jessie Penn-Lewis and Evan Roberts taught the concept of binding and loosing in *War on the Saints*, 33. Also, the February 20, 1937, issue of the *Alliance Weekly* features an article by Jessie Penn-Lewis entitled “How to Pray for Missionaries,” which contains teaching on binding the strong man. MacMillan writes that Dr. Robert Jaffray, Alliance pioneer missionary to China and Indonesia in the early part of the twentieth century, put into action in his meetings the practice of binding demonic forces. (*Encounter with Darkness* [Harrisburg: Christian Publications, 1980], 56-57). No doubt MacMillan received some of his teaching on binding and loosing from Jaffray. Chinese spiritual leader Watchman Nee, whose father-in-law was an Alliance pastor and who was influenced by Penn- Lewis, Murray and Simpson, also taught authoritative prayer and the power of binding and loosing in 1934. (*God’s Plan and the Overcomers* [New York: Christian Fellowship Publishers, 1977], 72-77). More recently, K. Neill Foster published an article in the *Alliance Witness* entitled “Binding and Loosing” (January 16, 1977, 3-5).

17 Simmons, 11. Simmons cites other differences between MacMillan and Hagin, such as MacMillan’s christocentric approach to authority vs. Hagin’s anthropocentric approach and MacMillan’s partially-realized eschatology vs. Hagin’s hyper-realized eschatology.

18 Hanegraaff, 65-71.

19 The concept of spiritual force may be traced back at least as far as the writings of Madame Guyon, who influenced a whole host of evangelical writers (Thomas Upham, Andrew Murray, Watchman Nee, A.B. Simpson, Hudson Taylor, W.E. Boardman, Jessie Penn-Lewis, A.W. Tozer, etc.) and refers to God Himself as “The Central Force” (Experiencing God Through Prayer [Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1984], 41-42). Andrew Murray, similarly, speaks of Christ Himself as “a living force” (God’s Best Secrets [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1971], Nov. 12). E.M. Bounds says that God Himself is a force and talks of believing prayer as a force (Purpose in Prayer [Chicago, IL: Moody Press, n.d.], 9, 24, 78, 80). Similarly, S.D. Gordon says, “Every time I pray my prayer is a spirit force” (Quiet Talks on Prayer [Chicago, IL: Fleming H. Revell, 1904], 32). A.T. Pierson asserts that believers are conductors of spiritual forces (The Acts of the Holy Spirit, 92). Likewise, Charles Spurgeon writes of spiritual forces likened to an electrical current and that “the influences of the Spirit of God are a force most spiritual” (1000 Devotional Thoughts [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976 reprint], 443). Charles Price, who has opposed some the teachings of the modern faith movement, nonetheless wrote: “Faith is the root force from which all things of God spring” (Two Worlds [Pasadena, CA: Charles S. Price, 1946], 13). Price probably got

his teaching from A.B. Simpson, for a few pages later in the same book he writes that Simpson had received spiritual revelation (p. 19).

20 A Larger Christian Life (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1988), 13. Again, he says, “The act of believing God for anything He has promised is, in reality, a creative force that produces effects and operations of the most important character” (The Life of Prayer [Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1989], 60). See also pp. 61- 62; Christ in the Bible, 4:199.

21 “They are also the great permanent forces wrought and employed by the Spirit of God for the development and progress of the divine life in the soul, and for its outlying influence” (W.E. Boardman, The Higher Christian Life [Boston, MA: Henry Hoyt, 1858], 247-48). “Faith is the all inclusive gift of God, as the great force for sustaining and developing the Christian life” (p. 256).

22 McConnell, 143.

23 Hanegraaff, 66.

24 A.B. Simpson, The Fourfold Gospel (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, n.d.), 48ff.

25 Ibid, 51.

26 Hunt, 13ff.; Hanegraaff, 80ff.; McConnell, 138ff.

27 S.D. Gordon uses the term “right mental attitude” in relation to health and healing, rather than positive mental attitude, meaning that one is thinking on Christ, not circumstances: “That mental attitude [thinking on Christ] will vitally and radically affect your body” (The Healing Christ [New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1924], 104, 108). “A right mental attitude exerts enormous influence. . . . Incidentally, this is the process of faith at work, a simple faith in Christ, in-breathed by the Holy Spirit. The objective mind lays hold of Christ’s promises and accepts unquestioningly the result as already assured” (p. 62-63). F.F. Bosworth uses Gordon’s term “right mental attitude” on page 136 of Christ the Healer (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1948, 1973), which shows he is influenced in this instance by Gordon rather than Kenyon as McConnell claims (McConnell, 68). Thomas Upham writes about rejoicing the Lord as a “scriptural state of mind” and that faith is expressed by rejoicing in the Lord (The Life of Faith [Boston, MA: Waite, Pierce, 1845], 319-324). Andrew Murray says, “Do not lose time in deploring your unbelief but look to Jesus,” confessing and getting rid of it (Divine Healing [Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1982], 36). He indicates that time should not be spent dwelling on one’s problems, but in speaking by faith and confessing the Word of

God. Charles Spurgeon writes of a joyful attitude restoring health: “Let your conscious feebleness provoke you to seek the means of strength: and that means of strength is to be found in a pleasant medicine, sweet as it is profitable—the delicious and effectual medicine of ‘the joy of the Lord’ ” (1000 Devotional Thoughts, 470).

28 Pamphlet, “Christ for the Body” (Nyack, NY: The Christian and Missionary Alliance, n.d.), 7-8.

29 Pamphlet, “How to Receive Divine Healing” (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, n.d.), 12.

30 The Lord for the Body (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1959), 66.

31 Seeing the Invisible (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1994), 35.

32 McConnell, 137-138.

33 Bruce Barron, 60, quoting Simpson in *The Fourfold Gospel* (p. 62): “We believe that God is healing before any evidence is given. It is to be believed as a present reality and then ventured on. We are to act as if it were already true.”

34 See Harold E. Raser, *Phoebe Palmer: Her Life and Thought* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), 249-50. Referring to [Romans 10:9,10](#) in *Faith and Its Effects* (New York, NY: Palmer & Hughes, 1848) Palmer writes:

“Do not forget that believing with the heart, and confessing with the mouth, stand closely connected” (p. 113). “Your heart has believed, but your lips have not fully, freely, and habitually made confession. And thus your part of the work has been left in part unfulfilled” (p. 296). “The one who initially ‘claims the blessing,’ but who does not persevere in regular testimony, loses the blessing” (p. 327). “You became ‘cautious in professing the blessing,’ and have ‘ceased to comply with the condition’ laid down by God” (p. 327).

“We pronounce our own blessings and curses.” (p. 31).

35 As early as 1858, W.E. Boardman also writes of “speaking out the faith” (*The Higher Christian Life*, 261, 263). Simpson’s contemporary Andrew Murray wrote in 1885 that “it is necessary

to testify to the faith one has” and that a person should give a testimony of faith “before feeling its effect on the body” (Divine Healing, 36, 27-28). He also taught we should speak out our desires in the name of Christ (The Prayer Life [Alresford, Hants, Great Britain: Christian Literature Crusade, 1981], 53). Hannah Whitall Smith wrote in 1870, “Put your will, then, over on the believing side. Say, ‘Lord, I will believe, I do believe,’ and continue to say it” (The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life [Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1942], 53). Again she wrote, “I have begun to assert over and over, my faith in Him, in the simple words, ‘God is my Father; I am His forgiven child; He does love me; Jesus saves me; Jesus saves me now!’ The victory has always been complete. . . . Let your unchanging declaration be from henceforth, ‘Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.’ When doubts come, meet them, not with arguments, but with assertions of faith. . . . Go at once and confess your faith, in the strongest language possible, somewhere or to someone. If you cannot do this by word of mouth, write it in a letter, or repeat it over and over in your heart to the Lord” (pp. 81-83).

36 Palmer, 189-90.

37 The Gospel of Healing, 90.

38 Ibid.

39 A Larger Christian Life, 19.

40 McConnell, 97.

41 The Life of Prayer, 70.

42 Hanegraaff, 87-95; McConnell, 141, 145.

43 See Charles S. Price, The Real Faith (Pasadena, CA: Charles S. Price Publishing Co., 1940), 58-69; The Creative Word (Pasadena, CA: Charles S. Price Publishing Co. 1941), 86; Charles Farah, Jr., From the Pinnacle of the Temple (Plainfield, NJ: Logos, n.d.), 100-103.

44 Though “faith in God,” as the object of faith seems to be the favored interpretation generally in modern scholarship, the idea of “faith of God” as a secondary or alternative translation is found as early as 1858 in Princeton scholar Joseph Addison Alexander’s The Gospel According to Mark (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980), 310. In his commentary on the Book of Acts, Simpson refers to Dr. Alexander (Christ in the Bible,

4:591), so his interpretation may have based on Alexander's exegesis. This apparently was an acceptable interpretation in scholarly evangelical circles, for in 1878 Charles Spurgeon preached a sermon on Mark 11:22 in which he used both interpretations, saying that we should have faith in God as the object of our faith and the faith of God as the source of faith: "It is literally, 'Have the faith of God'—the faith which is wrought in us by God, and sustained by God, for that is the only faith that is worth the living. . . . He is the author, the giver and the nourisher of faith" (The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit [Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1979], 24:645). Andrew Murray also makes reference to both "the faith of the Beloved Master" and "faith in God" (With Christ in the School of Prayer, 9, 89). One scholar friend remarked that such passages are "divinely ambiguous" so as to allow both interpretations. So it is not a matter of faith in God vs. faith of God, but both. Carrie Judd Montgomery, friend and associate of Simpson, points out that Bibles printed in 1921 give "faith of God" as an alternative translation (Secrets of Victory [Oakland, CA: Triumphs of Faith, 1921], 28). Jessie Penn-Lewis also teaches the "faith of God" interpretation in her book The Spiritual Warfare (Ft. Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1989, 56-57). Dr. T.J. McCrossan, professor of Greek at Manitoba University, taught that the "faith of God" interpretation was valid: "This 'faith of God' is the faith the Holy Ghost imparts to God's saints, just in proportion as we allow Him to control our lives. First Corinthians 12:9 tells us that 'faith' is one of the gifts of the Spirit, and this 'Spirit-imparted faith' is the faith of God" (Christ's Paralyzed Church X-Rayed [Youngstown

OH, 1937], 320-321). Price no doubt received his understanding of the faith of God from his close friend McCrossan, both of whom were influenced by Simpson. Kenyon may have received his interpretation from any of these sources.

45 The Life of Prayer, 70; see also p. 60; A Larger Christian Life, 54, 137-38; The Gospel of Healing, 89, 142-143; Seeing the Invisible, 18.

46 The Gentle Love of the Holy Spirit (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1983), 135. Referring to [Mark 11:22-24](#), George Muller records that he had a special gift of faith (The Autobiography of George Muller [Springdale, PA: Whitaker House, 1984], 85).

47 With Christ in the School of Prayer, 93. While Rhema Bible Training Center makes use of some of Murray's writings, faith teachers fail to follow his counsel in these teachings on faith. <J25>

48 Gospel of Healing, 88-89. Similarly, Simpson's associate Russell Kelso Carter writes, "If the faith is not given or inwrought by the Holy Spirit, no cure will follow" (Faith Healing Reviewed After Twenty Years [Boston & Chicago: The Christian Witness Co., 1897], 101).

49 Gospel of Healing, 91; also The Lord for the Body, 132, 134.

50 Seeing the Invisible, 33.

51 Ibid., 35. Again Simpson says: “To all who wait upon His will the Master gives some word of faith for the future” (Ibid., 62). “It is most essential in our conflicts of faith that we have a sure word of prophecy on which to rest, otherwise our struggle will be a very perplexing one” (Ibid., 129-130). Likewise, Carter writes, “Anyone may be healed who is drawn of the Spirit to seek healing. . . . We may be drawn of our own desire to be free from suffering or drawn by a mistaken notion of the purpose of God. In such cases the ‘prayer of faith’ simply cannot be offered. It is purely will power to ‘act faith’ and make believe we are healed. God holds the ‘prayer of faith’ in His own keeping, and when He ‘inworks’ it, the result, the positive result, certainly comes.” Faith Healing Reviewed, 88-89.

52 The Lord for the Body, 116. See also Murray, Divine Healing, 44-45.

53 Ibid., 123-4.

54 Ibid., 122.

55 Ibid., 120. See also R.A. Torrey, Divine Healing (Chicago: Moody Press, 1924), 19; R.K. Carter, The Atonement for Sin and Sickness (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1884), 126.

56 Chappell, 363.

57 Gospel of Healing, 64.

58 Ibid., 68-69. See also 65-69, 88-89.

59 Murray, Divine Healing, 54.

60 Simpson advised, “If you have any question about your faith for this, make it a special matter of preparation and prayer. Ask God to give you special faith for this act [abandoning medical treatment]. All our graces must come from Him, and faith among the rest. We have nothing of our own, and even our very faith is but the grace of Christ Himself within us. We can exercise it, and thus far our responsibility extends; but He must impart it, and we simply put it on and wear it as from Him” (Gospel of Healing, 88-89). Again he counsels, “Unless they have been led to trust Christ entirely for something higher and stronger than their natural life, they had better stick to natural remedies” (The Fourfold Gospel, 48).

61 Chappell, 363.

62 Gospel of Healing, 88.

63 Ibid., 68.

64 Simpson, “Editorial,” The Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly (November, 1890), 274.

65 Seeing the Invisible, 68-69.

66 Ibid, 36.

67 Days of Heaven on Earth (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1984), October 19. Murray also asserts that without self-denial and letting the world go faith cannot be exercised (The Prayer Life, 18). Likewise, Hannah Whitall Smith taught that abandonment precedes faith (The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life, 38-40). Faith healing evangelist Charles Price says similarly, “We have found that a broken spirit and a contrite heart and a feeling of unworthiness is generally an assurance of faith enough for healing, while on the other hand many people lose the blessing because they feel they are entitled to it” (And

Signs Followed, [Plainfield, NJ: Logos, 1972], 129). A.J. Gordon quotes faith healing pioneer Johann Christoph Blumhardt saying, “The way to have a strong faith is to think nothing of yourself” (The Ministry of Healing [Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1961], 159).